

It's National Minority Health Month



In an effort to eliminate health disparities and improve the health status of Minority populations, the 107th Congress, in H. Con. Res. 388 agreed on October 3, 2002 to establish a National Minority Health and Health Disparities Month. Many states and organizations are celebrating National Minority Health and Health Disparities Month in April. National Minority Health and Health Disparities Month is raising the awareness surrounding minority health issues.

National Minority Health and Health Disparities Month addresses the health needs of African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, American Indians/Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders.

Despite considerable progress in societal attitudes and laws regarding racial and gender prejudice over the last century, national health statistics continue to show a disproportionate number for people of color and women who experience limited access to health care and present poor health outcomes, compared to the general population of the United States. In addition to health disparities, economic disparities and lack of health insurance coverage continue to greatly affect women and communities of color.

The demographic changes anticipated over the next decade magnify the importance of addressing disparities in health status. Those groups currently experiencing inferior health are expected to grow as a proportion of the total U.S. population. The future health of America as a whole will be influenced substantially by improving the health of these racial and ethnic minorities. A national focus on disparities in health status is particularly important as major changes unfold in the way in which health care is delivered and financed.

Some of the goals of the National Minority Health Month include building public/private partnerships, foster cultural competency among health care providers, encourage health education and training and expand the use of state-of-the-art technology.